What is claimed is:

1. A system for managing a networked device, comprising:

verification means for verifying operation of the device by a verified user,

information acquisition means for acquiring device usage information including a value

5   indicating an amount of usage of the device by the verified user, and

information storage means for sequentially storing the device usage information

acquired by the information acquisition means.

2. The system of claim 1, comprising:

user information storage means for storing user information identifying at least one user

10   permitted to operate the device,

user information input means for inputting identification information identifying a user

operating the device, and

user verification means for verifying a user operating the device in accordance with

identification information input via the user information input means and user information stored

15   in the user information storage means,

the information acquisition means comprising:

counting means for counting an amount of usage of the device by the verified user, and

information creation means for creating device usage information, the device usage

information comprising the amount of usage of the device counted by the counting means and

20   information for identifying the verified user.

3. The system of claim 1, comprising:

amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record based upon device usage

information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting the comparison result.

4. The system of claim 1, comprising:

5   amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record of an arbitrary device used by an arbitrary user based upon device usage information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

10   output means for outputting the comparison result.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the device comprises a replaceable, expendable component, comprising:

amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record subsequent to replacement of the replaceable, expendable component in the device, based upon device usage 15 information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting the comparison result.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the user is associated with a section, comprising:

20   amount acquisition means for acquiring a usage amount record according to the section associated with the user, based upon device usage information stored in the information storage means,

comparison means for comparing the usage amount record and a reference value and

producing a comparison result, and

output means for outputting the comparison result.

7. A software control system for driving a terminal controlling a networked device, comprising:

5   storage means for storing driver software for driving the terminal,

selection means for selecting a device to be controlled by the terminal,

correspondence information storage means for storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between the software stored in the storage means and the selected device,

10   specification means for specifying driver software for driving the selected device in accordance with the correspondence information stored in the correspondence information storage means, and

installation means for providing the terminal with software specified by the specification means via a network and installing the software in the terminal.

15   8. The system of claim 7, comprising:

input means for inputting information identifying a driver software installer,

storage means for storing the information identifying the driver software installer, and

output means for identifying the driver software installer, based on the information stored in the storage means, when driver software stored in the storage means is upgraded, and

20   outputting a message to the identified driver software installer.

9. The system of claim 7, wherein

the storage means comprises means for storing information indicating that a driver software installer wants to be informed about a driver software upgrade, and

the output means comprises means responsive to the storage means for informing the driver software installer of a driver software upgrade.

10. A system comprising:

a networked target device, and

5   a management device, wherein

the management device stores user information specifying a user permitted to operate the target device,

the target device sends identification information identifying a user operating the target device to the management device,

10   the management device receives the identification information, verifies the user in accordance with the stored user information and the received identification information, and informs the target device of a verification result,

the target device permits a user verified by the management device to operate the target device, retrieves a usage amount of the target device used by the user, and informs the

15 management device of the retrieved usage amount, and

the management device stores, in association with each other, information corresponding to the informed usage amount, the user, and the used device.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the management device outputs a message based on the stored usage information.

20   12. A management client for communicating with a controller server that controls a networked target device, comprising:

information input means for inputting identification information identifying a user operating the target device,

verification means for sending the identification information to the controller server and

verifying the user operating the target device in accordance with response information sent from

the controller server,

counting means for counting an amount of usage of the target device made by a user

5 operating the target device, and

information sending means for sending device usage information, comprising the

amount of usage of the target device counted by the counting means, to the controller server.

13. A controller server for controlling a networked target device through a management

client, comprising:

10 storage means for storing user information specifying a user permitted to operate the

target device,

identification information acquisition means for acquiring, from the management client

via a network, identification information identifying a user operating the target device,

verification means for verifying a user operating the target device, in accordance with

15 the identification information acquired by the identification information acquisition means and

the user information stored in the user information storage means,

information acquisition means for acquiring usage information of the target device,

comprising an amount of usage of the target device made by a verified user operating the target

device, and

20 information storage means for sequentially storing the usage information acquired by

the information acquisition means.

14. A method for managing usage of a networked device, comprising:

verifying a user operating the device,

obtaining an amount of usage of the device made by the verified user operating the

device,

acquiring usage information of the device comprising the obtained amount of usage of

the device, and

5   storing the acquired usage information in a database.

15. The method of claim 14, comprising:

processing the usage information stored in the database, and

sending a message to at least one of a user of the device and an administrator of the

device.

10   16. A method for controlling software for driving a control terminal that controls a

networked device, comprising:

storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between driver

software for driving the control terminal and the device,

selecting a device to be controlled by the control terminal,

15   specifying, in accordance with the stored correspondence information, driver software

for driving the selected device,

providing the control terminal with the specified driver software via a network, and

installing the driver software in the control terminal.

17. The method of claim 16, comprising:

20   storing information associated with a user that has installed driver software in a storage

device,

identifying a user that has installed driver software in a storage device when the

installed driver software is upgraded, and

62

sending a message to the identified user.

18. A computer program for executing a method of managing use of a networked device, the method comprising:

verifying a user operating the device,

5   obtaining an amount of usage of the device made by the verified user operating the device,

acquiring usage information of the device comprising the obtained amount of usage of the device, and

storing the acquired usage information in a database.

10   19. A computer program for controlling software for driving a control terminal that controls a networked device, comprising:

storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between driver software for driving the control terminal and the device,

selecting a device to be controlled by the control terminal,

15   specifying, in accordance with the stored correspondence information, driver software for driving the selected device,

providing the control terminal with the specified driver software via a network, and

installing the driver software in the control terminal.

20. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave, for controlling a computer to 20 execute a method for managing usage of a networked device, comprising:

verifying a user operating the device,

obtaining an amount of usage of the device made by the verified user operating the device,

acquiring usage information of the device comprising the obtained amount of usage of

the device, and

sequentially storing the acquired usage information in a database.

21. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave for making a computer execute

5 software for driving a terminal which controls a networked device, comprising:

storing correspondence information indicating a correspondence between driver

software for driving the control terminal and the device,

selecting a device to be controlled by the control terminal,

specifying, in accordance with the stored correspondence information, driver software

10 for driving the selected device,

providing the control terminal with the specified driver software via a network, and

installing the driver software in the control terminal.